



*RI Department of Education
in Collaboration with the
RI Department of Health*

Physical Activity Health Risks Among Rhode Island Public High School Students 1997 and 2001

This summary presents selected information on physical activity behaviors that affect health risks among Rhode Island adolescents, based on results from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The YRBS is an anonymous and voluntary survey conducted in alternate years among randomly selected samples of high school students in over 50 participating states, territories, and municipalities nationwide. The YRBS was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor health-risk behaviors that contribute to the major causes of mortality, disease, injury, and other health and social problems among youth and adults in the United States.

During the spring of 1997 and 2001 the YRBS was administered to 1,528 and 1,396 randomly selected Rhode Island public school students, respectively, in grades 9 through 12. With response rates of 60% in 1997 and 63% in 2001, the results are representative of all public high school students statewide. Survey findings from both years can be used to make important inferences concerning health-risk behaviors within this population.

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KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Findings from both the 1997 and 2001 surveys showed that nearly two-thirds of students surveyed in Rhode Island as well as nationally participated in vigorous physical activity for at least 20 minutes on three or more of the past seven days. Rhode Island males were much more likely than females in 2001 to have participated in this level of exercise (74% versus 58%, respectively). It also appears that a slightly greater proportion of 9th and 10th graders had an adequate level of vigorous exercise compared to 11th and 12th graders in that year.
- ✓ Overall, nearly a third of students in Rhode Island and the nation had an insufficient amount of physical exercise (i.e. vigorous or moderate*) in 2001. A significantly higher percentage of females than males were reported to be lacking in this area (36% versus 23%). 10% of students in Rhode Island and the nation also reported no vigorous or moderate exercise at all during the seven days prior to the survey.
- ✓ Rhode Island students were more likely to attend physical education (PE) classes one or more days a week than students nationwide. At the same time they were less likely than their national counterparts to participate in PE classes on a daily basis. 88% of Rhode Island students attended PE classes at least once a week in 2001, but only 16 percent attended classes daily, compared to 52% and 32%, respectively, for students nationally. The rate of attendance at school based PE classes was the same among males as females in Rhode Island for 2001.
- ✓ The Rhode Island rate of student participation on sports teams was virtually the same as that reported nationwide in 2001. Approximately 56% of Rhode Island teens were involved in these activities, with the rate of participation considerably higher among males (62%) than among females (50%). Participation in sports seemed to decline somewhat among older students.
- ✓ In 2001, 34% of Rhode Island students and 38% of students nationwide watched 3 or more hours of television on an average school day. The percentage of students watching this much television declined steadily across grade levels, with a substantial reduction seen between 9th graders and 12th graders in Rhode Island.

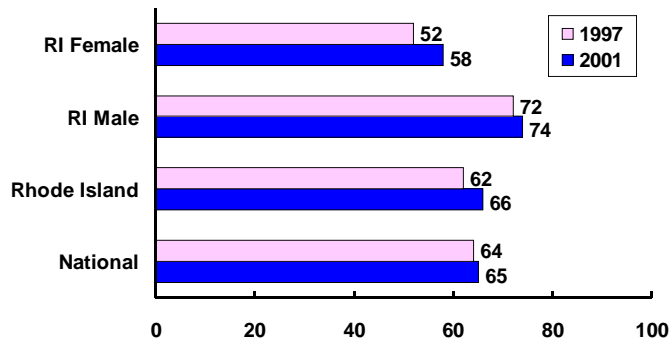
* Insufficient exercise is defined in the survey as not participating in at least 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity on three or more of the past seven days and not doing at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on five or more of the past seven days.

Physical Activity

Risk Behavior: Lack of regular physical activity

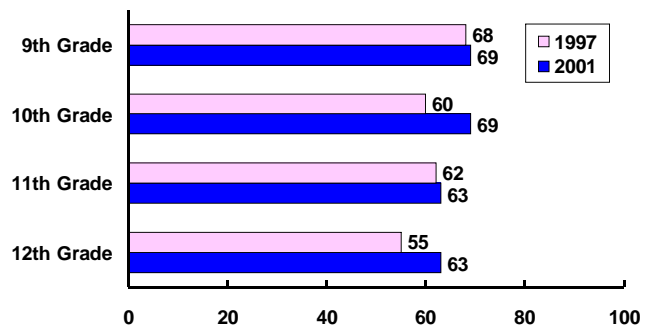
Rationale: Participation in regular physical activity helps build and maintain healthy bones and muscles, control weight, build lean muscle, and reduce fat; reduces feelings of depression and anxiety; and promotes psychological well-being. Over time, regular physical activity decreases the risk of dying prematurely, dying of heart disease, and developing diabetes, colon cancer, and high blood pressure.

Percentage of students who exercised or participated in vigorous physical activity*



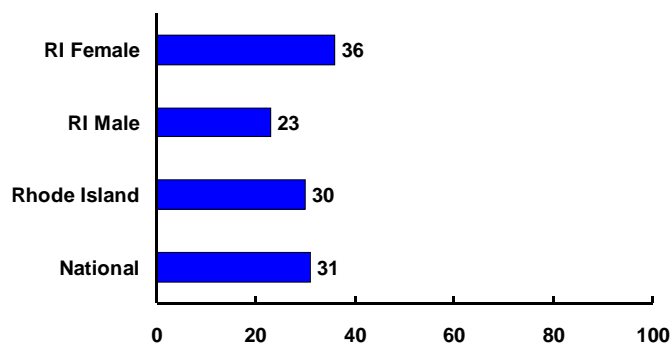
*Students that exercised or participated in physical activities for at least 20 minutes that made them sweat and breathe hard on three or more of the past seven days

Percentage of students who exercised or participated in vigorous physical activity by grade level*



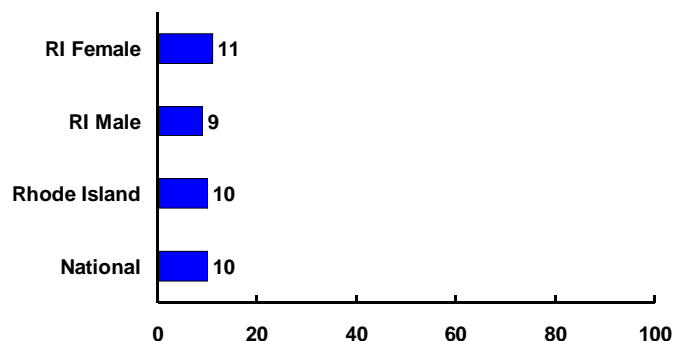
*Students that exercised or participated in physical activities for at least 20 minutes that made them sweat and breathe hard on three or more of the past seven days

Percentage of students with insufficient physical activity* - 2001 YRBS



*Percentage of students who did not participate in at least 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity on three or more of the past seven days and did not do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on five or more of the past seven days.

Percentage of students who participated in no vigorous or moderate physical activity during the past seven days – 2001 YRBS

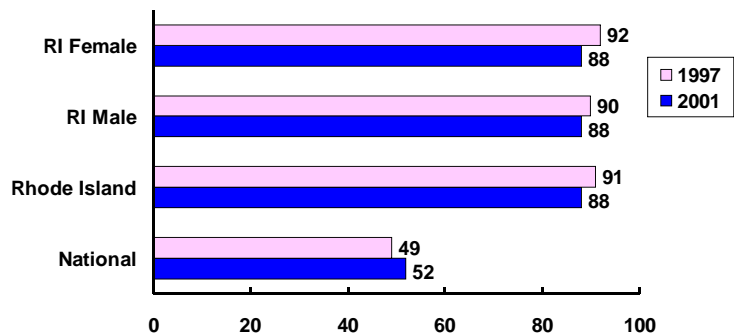


Physical Activity

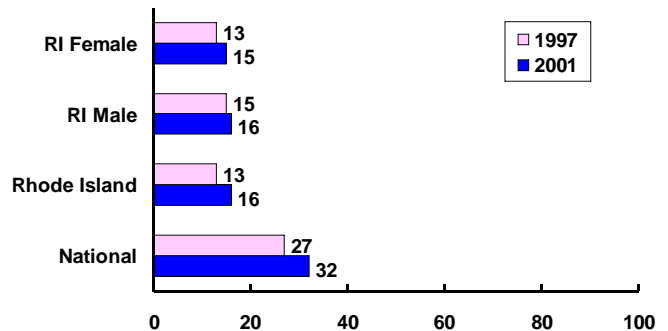
Risk Behavior: Lack of physical activity- Participation in physical education classes

Rationale: School physical education classes can increase adolescent participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity and help high school students develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to engage in lifelong physical activity.

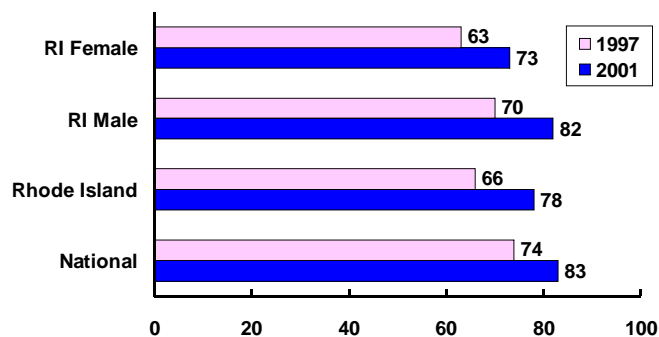
Percentage of students who attended physical education class one or more days during an average school week



Percentage of students who attended a PE class daily



Of students enrolled in physical education classes, the percentage who exercised or played sports for more than 20 minutes during an average class

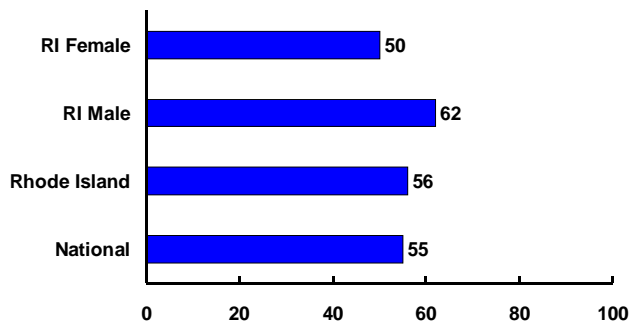


Physical Activity

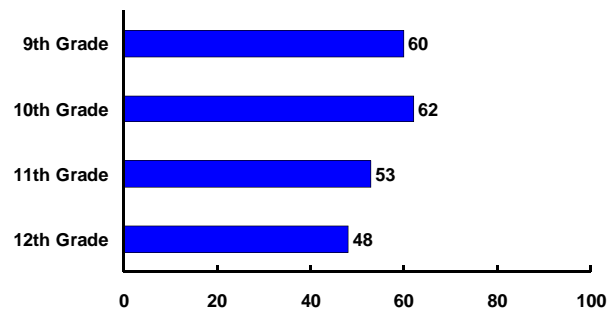
Risk Behavior: Lack of physical activity- Participation in team sports

Rationale: Participation on sports teams is common during adolescence. Most of these teams are sponsored by schools or other community organizations. Participation on a sports team typically reflects participation in moderate to vigorous physical activity. Participation on sports teams does not appear, however, to contribute substantially to the development of lifelong physical activity patterns. Sports participation also places adolescents at increased risk of injury.

Percentage of students who played on one or more sports teams during the past 12 months – run by school or non-school groups - 2001 YRBS



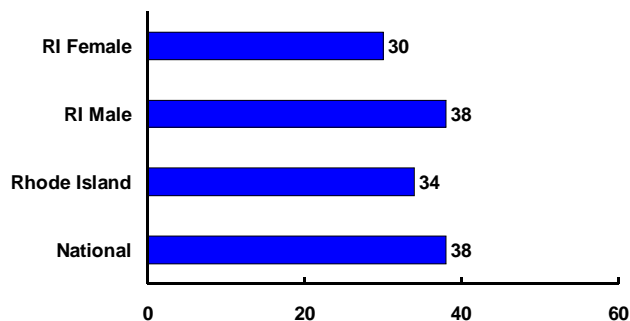
Percentage of Rhode Island students who played on one or more sports teams during the past 12 months – by grade level - 2001 YRBS



Risk Behavior: Lack of physical activity- excessive television viewing

Rationale: Television viewing is the principle sedentary leisure time behavior in the U.S. and television viewing in young people is related to obesity.

Percentage of students who watched 3 or more hours of TV per day on an average school day 2001 YRBS



Percentage of students who watched 3 or more hours of TV per day on an average school day by grade level - 2001 YRBS

